

Testimony before the Human Services Sub-Committee of the Appropriations Committee Re: D.S.S.
Budget

Thursday, 2/16/2017

Barbara Albert, Hartford Renter

Good afternoon/evening to the Appropriations Committee, also to everyone else.

My name is Barbara Albert, Hartford renter, registered voter, Advocate and Activist for the Disadvantaged, and Civil and Human Rights, including people with Mental Health issues. I am on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security Disability. I have multiple chronic and severe medical challenges, including mental illnesses, which I will be calling Brain Illnesses, which for me, is less inhumane, less stigma, less, 'I need to beat the crap out of me cause I got this 'bad person mentalness'. I did work before my illnesses became too overwhelming. Though I do volunteer work when able, I'm called 'indigent', 'unemployable', 'personae non-grata'. Being told and shown, and already knowing from society's ruthless messages, people like me, are not needed, or wanted. Misconceptions, and lack of understanding, allow absolutely, no feelings of chance for hope; quality of life is out of reach. In my opinion, I resemble nothing 'living.'

My experiences with being a client at CT Department of Social Services continue to baffle. D.S.S. obviously has no concept of what "Reasonable Accommodation in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act" means. I called for a hearing, for Food Stamps, within their 'timeframe'. When I called, I heard a recording saying that "I'll be receiving a response in the mail". I received no response. D.S.S. denies my call at all. People have been trying to help me, till abandonment. Dealing with food, a basic human need, to me, is an "Undue Burden". Eat, I get sick. Don't eat, I get sick. Food ferments inside before it gets properly processed. I'm allergic to fermented. *I need actual, "Qualified" help not just another, 'don't know what to do to help you'.* Don't know what to do, I've been failing miserably. While part of me says forget it, not like I'm eating anyway... Hermann Melville said, "Of all the preposterous assumptions of humanity over humanity, nothing exceeds the criticisms made of the habits of the poor by the well-housed, the well-warmed, and well-fed."

Again, I'm forced to start all over again, do the three sets of paperwork, of the same information, for 3 different programs, at 3 different times. Also the 3 anxiety filled times, waiting for that 'Discontinuance Notice', D.S.S. refuses to remove from 'auto-pilot'. Does what I write, get read? by a human?

"U.S. Constitution", "Amendment XIV": ...*"No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of the law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."*

"Universal Declaration of Human Rights", "Article 25": *"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and family, including food, clothing, housing and other medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of*

unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control."

Unfortunately, the cycle of poverty, injustice, and discrimination, continues. Abraham Lincoln has said, "To sin in silence makes a coward of men." (and women.)

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter." -Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Thank you for listening.

Respectfully,

Barbara Albert